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## EQUAL TO EMERGENCY

**A Prompt Diplomatic Strike by Which Consul Van Horn, at St. Thomas, Secures All the Purchasable Coal, and Strikes a Stinging Blow to the Imperious Spanish Government—Commended by Veteran Statesmen—Side Lights Upon an Able Man Who Has Come Through the Fire Unscathed.**

Rev. Mahlon Van Horn is making a proud record as United States Consul at St. Thomas, Danish West Indies. He hails from the above island and is a gentleman of liberal educational endowments. He was named for the place he so capably fills by some of the strongest social, commercial, and political influences in this country, and his labors are amply vindicating the wisdom of those who stood as his sponsors. He is wonderfully strengthening the administration with the shipping interests of all New England, which has a heavy trade with West Indies.

St. Thomas is one of the most important ports in the insular group that kisses our southeastern ocean front, as was evidenced during the recent Spanish-American war. It was the seat of intelligence, the depot of supplies, and the scene of the earliest transactions looking to the preparation for a conflict against the army of decadent Spain. It was at the start our eastern outpost and principal cable station. The news that war was inevitable reached St. Thomas speedily, following close upon the heels of the blowing up of that gallant sea-fighter, the Maine, in the harbor of Havana. It was only the next day that the cruiser Brooklyn came sailing into the bay with her flag at half-mast, conveying the sad message of disaster. The patriotism of the crew was at fever heat, and they were ready without further delay to avenge the dastardly outrage. From that day on St. Thomas became a strong center of naval operations, and the people grew more and more excited. The creoles' sympathies were almost wholly American, while the government officials from Europe were generally of Spanish sympathy. There were many Spanish refugees from Porto Rico and Cuba on the island. They were ardent patriots, many of them going direct from the island to Spain. During their stay they made it interesting for Consul Van Horn by threats of what they intended to do, and several times there were overt attempts at intimidation. But the coolness of the consul, his ready wit, and profitable reading of his book of instructions, carried American interests to a safe and successful conclusion.

All conversation of an insurrectionary character would be promptly reported. Life was made extremely hazardous, even when there was nothing observable on the surface. It was in the early stages of the conflict that coal became a most desirable



HON. MAHLON VAN HORN.  
United States Consul to St. Thomas, Danish West Indies.

object of possession. This being one of the chief coaling stations in the West Indies, it was looked toward as destined to play a stellar part in the war.

Consul Van Horn was telegraphed to by Secretary of State Day to buy a vessel and load it with the best steaming coal. A vessel could not be bought, but an American schooner of 1,250 tons capacity was leased, and all the coal for sale on the island was purchased within an hour after the telegram reached St. Thomas. It became known on the next morning that the purchase had been made and the Spanish consul, Mr. J. Vasquez de Amour, was much chagrined over the American's timely coup. It was a master stroke of diplomacy and earned for Mr. Van Horn the Republic's everlasting gratitude. From that time for two months the Spanish consul was most energetic in attempting to get coal for his government. Mr. Van Horn, however, was able to control all the purchasable coal that came into the St. Thomas market. By that he gained the points and held them like a veteran in the coal business.

Enemies of Mr. Van Horn worked desperately to discredit the negotiations, but failed utterly. It was proven that the transaction in connection with the cargo that was at first refused by the United States Government, while not authorized from Washington, was

a straightforward and correct thing to do, for the coal would have been sent to San Juan for Spain, and the war might have thus been prolonged. It was badly wanted for Cervera's fleet. His telegrams to Washington were censored, and while he was feverishly awaiting a reply, he found that he must buy the coal or permit it to be sold to the enemy. Assuming all risks he bought it for his government, and has since been fully justified and his act commended. So much for knowing just what to do in a trying emergency when the forces of evil are at work to undermine and destroy one's best efforts.

Mr. Van Horn had the very first of the new duties to perform, that of preparing ship's papers for the new possessions, as there are three European lines, whose ships go direct from his port to Porto Rico and Cuba, and all agree that these duties were performed with commendable satisfaction.

It is pleasing to note in this connection how agreeably the American naval officers and our consuls in foreign countries get on. By every authority from admiral down, Mr. Van Horn has been treated with the utmost consideration, and his advice and suggestions have been respectfully sought and generally acted upon, as his knowledge of the situation was conceded to be thorough, and his level headedness

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## WILL FIGHT UNDER NEGRO OFFICERS

**Authentic Evidence Brought Forward to Show that Negro Officers Are Capable and Faithful and More Efficient Under Their Government Than Any Other—A Story of Negro Valor that Will Reach All Hearts.**

The people of this country are always glad to hear from the forces in the field in the Philippines. The colored people are especially pleased to learn every scrap of news, for no letter, despatch, or message of any character fails to place on record some signal service or laudable achievement performed by some members of the gallant negro companies stationed there to guard the stars and stripes, and to uphold the dignity of liberty of our beloved native land.

The following correspondence explains itself. It is a series of testimonials properly authenticated, and tells, in terse and pointed language, a story of the patriotism, fidelity and capacity of the negro soldier. The recital comes not from the envious and grudging, who would exalt themselves at the expense of brave black boys who make their promotion possible and their lives safe, but from the big-hearted, true commanders, who are honest and square enough to tell the truth as it is, and who subscribe to that liberal philosophy voiced by a distinguished admiral, "There's glory enough for us all!"

If there is under the sun in these last days of the nineteenth century, any individual so dense as to charge that the negro soldier will not fight under officers of his own race we hope these few lines will reach his eyes, and lead him out into the light of history and into the realm of demonstrated fact.

AN INTERESTING SYMPOSIUM OF NEGRO VALOR.  
San Fernando de la Union Luzon, P. I.,  
April 29, 1900.  
General Orders, No. 10.

The regimental commander takes pleasure in congratulating Capt. Buck and thirty men of his company on their capture of Pedro Paterno on the 25th of April. This prominent insurgent had been long believed to be in hiding somewhere in Benguet, but he and his protectors there had successfully eluded all previous searches. Capt. Buck's astuteness in discovering the fugitive's whereabouts no less than the energy of the whole night's march through drenching rain and over rough trails to make the capture, is particularly commended to the regiment to be borne in mind and emulated.

May 2, 1900.  
General Orders, No. 11.  
The following telegram just received  
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